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CAMBRIDGE PRIZE POEMS.

T. Miller, Printer, 5, Noble Street, Cheapside.

CAMBRIDGE PRIZE POEMS:

BEING

A COMPLETE COLLECTION

OF THE

ENGLISH POEMS

WHICH HAVE OBTAINED

THE CHANCELLOR'S GOLD MEDAL

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.



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COLUMBUS.

A Poem

WHICH

OBTAINED THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL

AT THE

CAMBRIDGE COMMENCEMENT

July, 1813.

BY GEORGE WADDINGTON,

SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

Argument.

GRENADA being taken from the Moors, a Voyage of Discovery is proposed to Isabella by the patrons of Columbus, and acceded to. Her feelings and wishes. The great object the propagation of Christianity.—Columbus described. His projects of Discovery first formed, perhaps, in Childhood, encouraged by Hope, and ultimately confirmed by Reason.—He sets sail. Address to the Gales and Sea-gods. His dangers and disappointments. Variation of the Needle. Mutiny of his men. Certain signs at length appear, and land is discovered.—The Discovery of most importance, as it tends to promote Christianity and Civilization.—Natural wonders of America. Andes and its Volcanoes. Rivers that rise from it. Forests. Inferiority of the human race. Superiority of Civilization to a state of Nature. American women often murder their female infants to save them from Slavery. Civilization will probably be the consequence of intercourse with the Old World.—Progress of Discovery. Peyrouse, Cook, Drake, Raleigh, Gama. Return to Columbus. He is sent home in chains; but soon proceeds in his search after a passage to India, and discovers the Continent near the mouth of the Orinoco.—Is shipwrecked on Jamaica, and saves his men from the fury of the Indians by predicting an eclipse.—Isabella dies, and Columbus passes the remainder of his life a petitioner at the Court of Ferdinand.—Conclusion.

C O L U M B U S.

YE frowning tow'rs, where erst the bright array
Of Moorish warriors glanc'd a fearful day ;
Ye mosques majestic, where fanatic War
Yoked his red steeds to pale Religion's car,
Are ye then fall'n, and has your pride confess'd
The soul that slumbers in a woman's breast ?
But yet, methinks, if glory and if pow'r
Must fade and vanish, like a summer flow'r,

If Heaven command and Fate direct the blow,
'Tis sweet to fall beneath a gen'rous foe. 10
For hark ! I hear the victor Queen proclaim,
" Ambition hence and all the pomp of fame !
" Let warlike toils, let furious Discord cease,
" And yield her sceptre to the seraph Peace,
" Hail lovely daughter of a rugged sire !
" Chase the dark glooms of War with vestal-fire ;
" Fair as when Spring first shews her trembling form,
" Or morn comes shiv'ring from the midnight storm.
" And say, shall Lusian barks alone explore
" Each unknown wave, and number ev'ry shore ? 20
" Hail wealthier climes and breathe a purer air,
" The first to triumph, as the first to dare ?
" Ye souls, that taught the faithless Moor to yield,
" Blaze forth more glorious in an ampler field ;

“ While to the Indian’s wond’ring eyes unfurl’d,
“ Castilian banners bless the unknown World ;
“ Exalt his views, Religion’s charms display,
“ And point the passage to eternal day.”

But who that Hero, from whose manly brow
Conspiring virtues dart an heav’nly glow? 30
Each mild, each nobler grace is pictur’d there,
The heart to feel, and yet the soul to dare :
Onward he darts his rapture-speaking gaze,
Eyes the blue waves that drink the ev’ning rays,
Salutes the blushing skies, and from afar
Hails the bright omen of the western star.
Him haply slumb’ring by the waves, that roar
In hollow murmurs round his native shore,

When every nerve was strung to Hope and Joy,
And fancy flutter'd round her fav'rite Boy, 40
Oft fairy visions bless'd, and round his head
On lightest wing their sweet delusion spread.
Then would he seem to plough the western main,
While rocks oppos'd and tempests rag'd in vain ;
See other skies and stars unnam'd survey,
A milder climate, and a brighter day:
Then would he start and gaze the concave blue,
And half believe the fair deception true ;
Bless the pale Moon, that pour'd a purer light,
Bless ev'ry orb that gemm'd the vest of night: 50
Then how his heart would boil, his bosom swell,
Till at stern Reason's touch the baseless fabric fell.
Yet, when the billowy solitude he view'd,
Thoughts dimly grand and hopes sublimely rude

Full oft would dart across his troubled mind,
Would dart, and leave a dubious track behind :
“ Ye western gales, that float on silken wing,
“ Whence stole ye, say, the fragrance that ye bring ?
“ Is there no green-hair'd daughter of the deep, 59
“ Around whose shores the wild waves learn to sleep,
“ Where thro' the livelong year the dancing hours
“ Fling from their golden urn unfading flow'rs ?
“ Yes, not for us alone th' imperial Sun,
“ Since time began, his giant course has run ;
“ The starry hosts their silvery ranks display,
“ The Moon's bright crescent sheds a midnight day
“ On other shores, and Nature's viewless hand
“ Rolls smoother billows round an happier land.”
Thus would he hold sweet converse with the gale,
That flutter'd idly round his little sail ;

Nor ceas'd the young enthusiast's breast to glow,
Where Zembla* slumbers in her waste of snow;
E'en there could hope his fearless bosom warm,
And sooth the horrors of a polar storm.
And e'en when manhood's calmer pow'r refin'd
The thoughts, that wanton'd in his youthful mind,
The fairy landscape at pure Reason's ray
Beam'd but more bright, and kindled into day:
For he would wander by the ocean's side
From blushing morn to ling'ring eventide, 80
Till the mind promis'd what the hopes conceiv'd,
And sceptic Wisdom wonder'd and believ'd.
Ye Lusitanian shores, ye rocks, that brave
'The idle threat'nings of th' Atlantic wave, .

* Columbus in his youth made some discoveries near Greenland.

Oft have ye seen him westward dart his eye,
While, list'ning to the surge that murmur'd by,
With straining look he drank the parting light,
Till India burst upon his ravish'd sight.

Ye Gales, if e'er, when Time was young, ye bore
Phœnician * barks around fair Afric's shore, 90
Breathe softly sweet your mildest murmurs now,
As when of yore young Ammon's daring prow
Rode proudly floating down the stream, that lavcs
Its native gold, and stemm'd the Indian waves.
Be still, thou billowy bosom of the deep ;
Ye Tempests, fold your dusky wings and sleep :
Secure, ye Nymphs, the gallant vessels urge
'Mid rocks that lurk beneath the glassy surge.

* See Herodotus, Book IV. 42.

In mute suspense see gazing thousands stand,
Crown every steep and press the lab'ring strand. 100
But who can trace the feelings, that impart
A fearful joy, and swell the throbbing heart ?
Where dwells despair, or ardour's gen'rous fire,
What fears discourage, or what hopes inspire ?
Yes! when the vessels lessen on the view,
Perchance some parent weeps a last adieu;
Then burns with shame, and clears his glist'ning eye,
His pride enforcing, what his hopes deny.
E'en now, methinks, the daring barks explore,
Where fancy's eye had never pierc'd before; 110
Why start ye, Nereids, from your coral caves,
Fly with unsandal'd foot and skim the waves ?
Why flit ye, Spirits, on the dusky air,
While sighs the gale and distant meteors glare ?

Hide, sullen Genius, hide that giant form,
That yokes the winds, and riots on the storm ;
Avenge not now thy violated reign,
Thy shatter'd sceptre and thy broken chain;
For if thou lov'st to drink the parting breath,
And glut thee with the bursting sighs of death, 120
Enough of victims shall thy arms enfold,
While breezes waft, while oceans lead to gold.

Where never eagle wooed meridian light,
Where never sea-bird wing'd its wildest flight,
The gallant vessels steer'd their lonely way;
A world of waters glimmer'd to the day,
A world of waters fading on the view
Caught the last tints that purple Ev'ning threw.

But ah! how oft did Hope's deluded eye
Hail ev'ry distant cloud that fring'd the sky 130
Beneath the pale Moon's visionary gleam,
Till morn invidious chased the joyous dream.
But fearless still they stem th' unfathom'd plains,
One guide still aids them, and one friend remains,
True as the wondrous sign, whose cloudy blaze
Darken'd or glow'd on Israel's thankless gaze.
Mysterious Magnet! e'er thy use was known
Fear, clad the deep in horrors not its own;
But when thy trembling point vouchsaf'd to guide,
Astonish'd nations rush'd into the tide, 140
While o'er the rocky wave and billowy wild
Young Commerce plum'd his eagle-wing and smiled.
Mysterious Magnet! while the tempests low'r
Dost thou too leave them at the fearful hour?

Does Heaven's protecting hand desert the brave,
No hope to cheer them, and no pow'r to save?
Well may Sedition, daughter of Depair,
Point to the boundless waste, the starless air,
The fancied shapes that float upon the wind,
And claim the vales that blossom far behind. 150
But when the Spectre rear'd her baleful form
More hideous than the fiend that rides the storm,
Say, did the Hero from her clamours fly,
Or shrink beneath the terror of her eye?
Ah no! I see the quick indignant glow
Flush his dark cheek and glisten on his brow:
One glance from him can light a kindred flame,
And awe the rebel spirit into shame. *

But now no tempests rage—a gentle gale
Sighs thro' the shrouds and lingers round the sail.

The ev'ning clouds, that hover o'er the west, 161

Glow with a softer tinge, a lovelier vest ;

The bird in silence wings his way to greet

The shady vallies of his native seat.

Hesper leans list'ning from his throne on high

To floating strains of heav'nly harmony ;

Then all is dark, and all is still again,

And night sits brooding o'er the silent main.

“ Is it a fire * that glimmers from afar ?”

'Tis but some lonely, melancholy star : 170

Or meteor, that descends to drink the wave

Or gem, that lights the Sea-fiends to their cave.

“ It moves—again it moves—and on the sand

“ Sheds its ^{*}glad beam—it must—it must be Land!”

* Columbus himself discovered a light on shore, which he immediately saluted as an emblem of the religious light he was going to spread.

How sweet to sad misfortune's way-worn child
Wanders the streamlet thro' the trackless wild!
How sweet, escap'd the horrors of the storm,
The trembling Moon unveils her virgin form!
But oh! how far more sweet that sacred light
Beam'd life and glory on Columbus' sight. 180

Emblem of Faith, and all the joys, that glow
From chaste Religion's lamp on men below,
I hail thee too! and may the holy blaze,
That hides from half mankind its clouded rays,
Pour its full flood (as Truth proclaims it must,
E'er the wide world be crumbled into dust)
On ev'ry clime, and beaming from above
Unveil the glory of eternal love.

Ye lonely shades, where famish'd Indians stray,
Ye too shall blush beneath the lamp of day! 190
Ye mountains, haply on your snow-clad brow
Wild flow'rs shall wake to life, and fruitage blow;
The streams that roll their nameless waves along,
Unknown to fame, and unadorn'd by song,
Shall start to view triumphant navies ride,
And spires reflected from their glassy tide.

Whither does Fancy wing her rapt'rous flight?
“ Visions of wonder, spare my aching sight!”
See where proud Andes rears his giant form,
And smiles serenely tow'ring o'er the storm; 200
While round his breast innocuous lightnings play,
And thunders roll in distant peals away.

But when he bids his native tempests rave,
He shrouds his brow, he bursts each secret cave,
And wrapt in clouds from his volcano throne
Pours floods of flame and lightnings all his own :
Till when he sees his craggy summits hurl'd
Afar, and feels the rocking of the world,
He veils his nodding crest in deeper shade,
And trembles at the storm himself has made, 210
Yet, tho' he crown his starry head with fire,
A thousand rivers hail him for their sire.
And rolling onward wake the sweets, that sleep
Mid fragrant wilds, and bear them to the deep ;
Or haply wand'ring thro' some trackless grove,
Where the lone Indian ne'er had dared to rove,
The green banana's od'rous leaf they lave,
That leans and listens to the babb'ling wave ;

Till lost in lovelier shade they fear the day,

And in melodious murmurs die away.

220

But tell me, Nature, when thy mighty hand
Form'd in a nobler mould this new-born land,
With bold design a prouder work began,
Why in such giant regions dwindles Man?
For mark the feeble limb, the vacant look,
The listless form, that slumbers by the brook,
And, when the summer's careless hour is past,
Shrinks faint and houseless from the wintry blast;
While the proud mind's degraded treasures sleep,
Like a gem twinkling to the reckless deep. 230

Oh ye, who ven'rate Nature's artless child,
And love man best when rugged and when wild,

If such primeval freedom's barb'rous train,
Hail we the friendly hand that forg'd our chain !
Stoop, Briton, stoop to bless thy Roman lord,
And rev'rence Cardoc's* less than Cæsar's sword.
Oft has the mother by some foaming tide
Clasp'd her pale daughter's infant form and sigh'd—
“ Shalt thou too linger thro' the joyless day
“ A wretch—a slave—and weep the night away ?
“ Endure a tyrant's scorn—a tyrant's blow— 241
“ With but one gloomy hope to sooth thy woe ?
“ Come let us snatch that hope and dare to die !”
She spoke and smiled in speechless agony ;
Then headlong rush'd into the pitying wave—
“ Roll on, ye streams, and waft us to the grave !”

* Cardoc was the Caractacus of the Romans, as we learn from Welch tradition.

What art thou, Man, without the ties that bind
Congenial souls, and harmonize the mind?
Without the hopes that thrill, the fears that move,
The strings, that vibrate to the voice of love? 250
Without the tear that gems Compassion's eye?
—A dark cloud driv'n across the midnight sky.
Yet thou, degraded Savage, thou shalt bless
The tender bond of social happiness;
Shalt rise to prouder thoughts, shalt learn to scan
Thy native worth, and feel thyself a man;
Then too Religion's self shall smile, and fling
Æthereal love, like dew-drops, from her wing.

Why sing ye, Muses, round Bellona's car,
Responsive only to the shouts of war? 260

Shall harps like your's discordant rage inspire,
Shall death be echoed from a virgin lyre?
Tell me, ye surges, on what desert shore
Peyrouse lies whit'ning as the tempests roar;
Unless, perchance, each toil and danger braved,
Some Nereid loved him, or some Triton saved,
While now his influence wand'ring unconfin'd
Or sooths the troubled deep, or lulls the wind.
Or shall we sing lamented Cook, and tell
How sigh the wild waves where a Briton fell? 270
O'er paths untried the gen'rous sailor roved,
And died a martyr to the cause he loved.
But see another son of Albion* rise!
Fame speeds his course, and sparkles in his eyes:

* Sir F. Drake.

Start into light from ocean's breast, ye isles,
Breathe all your sweets and lavish all your smiles !
Hail him, ye stars, that see his flag unfurl'd;
Roll on, thou Sun, and guide him round the world ;
'Tis done—I see the laurell'd hero stand
A new Columbus on a worthier land. 280
Here wond'ring nations tell of Raleigh's fame,
And oceans wake their echoes to his name ;
And there, while Gama ploughs the awe-struck main :
The Spirit* waves his misty arms in vain.
But while the Muse's eye with eager gaze
Of brilliant forms the length'ning train surveys,
Wearied on him it rests, who first began
Proud Glory's march and triumph'd in the van.

* See Camoen's Description of the Spirit of the Cape.

But see, pale Av'rice pours her blasting breath—

The march of Glory* is the march of Death ! 290

But not at him, ye fiends of vengeance, aim

Your poison'd weapons and your shafts of flame,

For he was dress'd in Mercy's sweetest smiles,

Soft as the breeze that flutters round your isles.

Is his that form, is his that steady eye

Rais'd to the heav'ns in conscious dignity ?

See now he burns with pride and clasps his chain,

Now chides his rebel heart that swells again :

“ Are these the gifts that crown life's parting day,

“ These the rewards that grateful princes pay? 300

* I here allude only to the cruelties committed by the contemporaries and companions of Columbus, which served, however, as a prelude to the systematic massacres which succeeded them.

“ Then hail, ye chains, since such my glorious doom,
“ Adorn my life, and slumber in my tomb !*
“ Roll on, ye waves, ye gales, go murmuring by,
“ Ye must not—shall not—hear Columbus sigh !”
Ev’n then could Honour’s magic voice control
The mighty storm that struggled in his soul,
Could chase each thought of private wrongs away,
Like clouds that fly before the car of day.

Again, great Chief, I see thy sails unfurl’d,
Where Oronoco heaves his wat’ry world, 310
Mocks the degen’rate streams round us that flow,
Our swelling Danube, and our fabled Po ;

* See Robertson’s History of America. Book II.

Wrapt in sublimer thoughts I see thee stand,
And hail him offspring of a mightier land.*

Snatch, while thou may'st, a momentary joy!
Far other dreams thy shipwreck'd hours employ.
Where proud Jamaica rising o'er the main
Views from her rocky throne the azure plain,
Thy hapless crew each barb'rous outrage dare,
And vent on friends the fury of despair; 320
Through peaceful vales ungrateful flames arise,
And the wild death-shrieks pierce the angry skies:
Till rage can fire the Indian's languid heart,
Nerve his weak arm, and point th' avenging dart.
'Twas night, and on æthereal coursers driv'n,
The pale Moon wander'd through the vault of heav'n;

* I mean the Continent; he had as yet only discovered Islands.

Queen of the stars, that shrunk beneath her eye,

She rode sublime in cloudless majesty.

Sudden o'ercast her pure resplendent ray,

Veil'd in portentous gloom she fades away. 330

The chief, whose piercing eye alike could scan

The laws of nature and the mind of man,

Had told how night's offended power would frown,

And shroud the heav'ns in horrors not their own,

And feigned, perchance, that viewless lightnings

play'd,

And vengeance slumber'd in the mystic shade.

The Indian dropp'd his spear, and own'd his Lord,

And while he hated, trembled and adored.

Yet see! again he ploughs his wat'ry way,

Escap'd the wilds and man more wild than they;

But still no joys shall crown thy weary head, 341

Woes press on woes, and Hope herself has fled.

Fame's short career and life's ambition o'er,

Thy Queen, thy Friend, thy Guardian is no more.

Set is that orb, whose radiance pour'd relief

On ev'ry toil, and soften'd ev'ry grief.

Yes, and thy waning star must shortly fade

Shorn of its beams, and sink into the shade ;

As, following still the Sun's departed light,

Pale Hesper trembles on the verge of night. 350

And must that ardent soul, that manly form,

Child of the rocks and nursling of the storm,

Bow to a toy, and cringe before a crown,

And kneel and tremble at a tyrant's frown ?

Shrinks that proud heart before a purple vest,

While courtiers scoff and tinsell'd nobles jest ?

Far be the thought ; the weak, th' ignoble crew
May wound thy gen'rous soul, but not subdue ;
And when thou sink'st, thy latest light is shed
To gild the clouds that blacken round thy head ;*
As when some meteor-flash, or lonely star 360
Beams thro' the tempest's op'ning breast afar,
It does but mock surrounding gloom, and shew
Dread Night the horrors brooding on her brow.

But not like meteor-flash, or shot star's ray,
Thy praise, illustrious chief, shall pass away ;
Still shall it mount on bolder wing sublime,
And draw new vigour from the shafts of Time.

* Columbus continued till death eager to extend his discoveries, and, by so doing to promote the glory of his persecutors.

What, tho' Columbia bear another's name,
Snatch'd as he has the shadow of thy fame— 370
Still let him dress'd in borrow'd splendor shine,
Since glory's bright reality is thine.
And when in happier days one chain shall bind,
One pliant fetter shall unite mankind ;
When war, when slav'ry's iron days are o'er,
When discords cease, and av'rice is no more,
And with one voice remotest lands conspire
To hail our pure Religion's seraph fire ;
Then Fame attendant on the march of Time,
Fed by the incense of each favor'd clime, 380
Shall bless the Man, whose heav'n-directed soul
Form'd the vast chain, which binds the mighty
whole,

BOADICEA.

A Poem

WHICH

OBTAINED THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL

AT THE

CAMBRIDGE COMMENCEMENT

July, 1814.

BY WILLIAM WHEWELL,

OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

BOADICEA.

TYRANT of earth ! whose banner wide unfurl'd
Waved o'er the ruins of a conquer'd world ;
O Rome, beneath yon heav'n what region lies,
But calls on thee the vengeance of the skies ?
What favour'd shore where ne'er thy legions dread
Have crush'd the flowers of Peace with iron tread ?
But now—an outcast band, a robber horde,
And now—of half the globe the scourge and lord.

Ausonia's plains beneath thy bondage groan,
And Carthage sinks, and leaves her place un-
known; 10

E'en fair Athena sees her sacred fane
Shrink at thy touch, and mourns her ægis vain :
For thee the East her sparkling treasures spreads,
For thee her mountains lift their spicy heads ;
Ungorged with all the teeming Orient yields
Thou ask'st the North her bleak and barren fields ;
Indignant Ister rolls his subject flood
And feels his eddies warm with native blood ;
Albion looks forth from all her cliffs—thy oars
Bear war and bloodshed to her peaceful shores, 20
Impatient still while Peace and Freedom own
One single spot beneath the starry zone.

And thinks thy soul, elate with conquest's glow,
Thy widening reign no bounds on earth shall know?
Think'st thou the Deluge of thy power shall spread
Till not one islet shews its verdant head;
Till, like the dove the olive-branch that bore,
Fair Peace shall seek in vain a friendly shore,
And banish'd Liberty on soaring wing
Back to her native skies indignant spring—? 30
Vain thought! beyond thy empire's sweeping bound
Shall Freedom find some hallow'd spot of ground;
Driven from the climes where fervid summer glows,
She seeks the northern wastes and polar snows,
There, though the bleak blasts rend th' inclement
 sky,
Shall Nature smile beneath her cheering eye,

Unfading there her blooms and flow'rs remain
Till thy vast empire shrinks to nought again.

What though thou deem that thine is Albion's
shore

Her day of freedom gone, her battles o'er; 40
Deem thou may'st smiling hear around thee rise
Her groans of anguish, her accusing cries,
And see her Queen in widow'd sorrow stand
Red from thy scourge, and bleeding from thy hand,
Destined in vain her country's wrongs to mourn,
Slave to thy slaves, insulted and forlorn;
Perhaps e'en yet her patriot arm may stay
Thy mad Ambition on his crimson'd way.
E'en now—while 'mid the calm that slumbers wide,
Thou view'st the prospect round in swelling pride,

Inhalest each breeze, and think'st for thee they bear
Their ripening fragrance through the balmy air;—
E'en now the coming tempest loads the gales, 53
Waves through the woods, and breathes along the
vales;

It comes—it comes—I hear the boding sound
That calls the spirits of the storm around,
O'er all the sky their sable wings they spread,
And point the bolts of Vengeance at thy head.

Ye Powers that guard your Albion's rude domains,
Her trackless wilds and grey-extending plains, 60
Untrod since Nature's hand in ruin hurl'd
The bands of rock that chain'd her to the world;
Whom the rapt Druid sees in terrors rove
'Mid the deep silence of his gloomy grove,

Or where your temples vaulted by the skies,
A frowning band of giant columns rise ;
And ye who haunt the shores where Mona rides
Securely moor'd amid the rocking tides,
Bend from your cloudy car. If e'er your force
Check'd Julius' steps, and stay'd his victor course ;
If urged by you Caractacus's car 71
Swept down Silurian steeps the torrent war ;
If fired by you his captive eye could roll
Its freeborn glance and awe a despot's soul ;
Now bid each arm in injured freedom strong,
Avenge a Country's woes, a Monarch's wrong.

Lo ! through the surge the Roman chargers
bound
That girds your sacred Mona's woods around ;

In vain your hoary Druids on the shore,
Their torches toss and imprecations pour ; 80
In vain your fearless tribes, a faithful band,
Before your shrines unyielding fall or stand :
The victors stride above the ranks of dead,
Your hallow'd vistas shrink before their tread ;
Fall'n are your sacred groves where silence reign'd
Your altars ruin'd and your shrines profaned,
Your priests, their silver hair with gore defiled,
Lie on the strand in ghastly carnage piled ;
And lie they unrevenged ? with impious hand,
Shall Rome deal woes around the groaning land,
And shall no power that guards the injured good
Look from yon azure skies, and mark her deeds of
blood ?

Yes, they have mark'd; and speak in* portents
dread

The wrath that trembles o'er th' oppressor's head.
Push'd from its base his idol Victory falls,
Unbodied furies howl along the walls,
Empurpled Ocean glows with slaughter dyed,
And hoary Thames beneath his glassy tide,
Unseen before, his shadowy towers displays,
And wrecks of palaces of former days; 100
As if some nation oncc that rose sublime,
Once proud like Rome, and deep like her in crime,
Would lift its head and break its long repose
To warn the tyrant of impending woes.

* Tacitus, *An.* XIV. 32. Dio Cass. LXII. 1.

O sinking Albion, yet again arise,
Rear thy fair front, and lift thy gladden'd eyes ;
Feel all a mother's joy thy sons to see
Grasp the red blade for freedom and for thee.
Pour'd from the pathless glen, the forest's gloom,
Fierce as their native bands of wolves they come ;
Dark-frowning chiefs, and shaggy forms appear, 111
Burning for blood, and shake the thirsty spear
While, 'mid the throng, like whiten'd foam that laves
The restless ocean's darkly-rolling waves,
The hoary Bards and white-robed Druids fling
The song of battle from the trembling string.

But why above the throng observant strains
Each eager gaze o'er all the crowded plains ?

'Tis she!—above the countless thousands seen
Lifts her exalted form the Warrior-Queen: 120
Her lofty forehead mark'd with high command,
And stamp'd with majesty by nature's hand;
Indignant Freedom glows upon her cheeks,
But on her front no milder passion speaks,
Severe and stern;—not her's the gentler grace,
The melting eye, the fascinating face,
The charms that o'er each speaking feature rove,
And fix the gaze, and steal the soul to love;
No—would'st thou view fair Woman's softer mould?
Then by her side those sister forms behold; 130
Bright o'er the wavy crowd as western beams
That gild with trembling light pleased Ocean's
streams.

Oh! though each bosom there, each untaught mind,
By social arts untutor'd, unrefined,
Knew but the feelings Nature gives her child,
Rude as her savage scenes, and harsh, and wild,
Yet think not there might Beauty shed her rays
Unmark'd, unfelt, by every careless gaze.
No—as each Briton's eye was thither turn'd,
Each swelling breast with keener vengeance burn'd,
Each firmer grasp'd his spear and inly swore 141
To write their injuries in Roman gore.

O Beauty! heaven-born Queen! thy snowy hands
Hold the round earth in viewless magic bands;
From burning climes where riper graces flame
To shores where cliffs of ice resound thy name,

From savage times ere social life began
To fairer days of polish'd, soften'd man,
To thee, from age to age, from pole to pole,
All pay the unclaim'd homage of the soul. 150
Though not, Bonduca, thine the dove-like eye
That asks, omnipotent, for sympathy,
Yet to that stately form, that regal brow
Might free-born Pride, and fearless Valour bow.
All hail, thy Albion's much-loved Queen, to thee,
Daughter of Monarchs! Monarch of the free!
Heiress of Kings whose patriarchal sway
Th' untamed Icenian triumphs to obey!
Oft have thy Britons seen a female hand
Pour life and gladness round a grateful land, 160
Oft have they seen a woman's prowess guide
The storm of war, and stem the battle's tide ;

E'en now they feel thy words, thy looks impart
Indignant courage to each free-born heart,
And bid thee lead them on, where Freedom cries,
And Vengeance beckons from the angry skies.

Heard'st thou, O Rome, that shout, whose deepen'd
shock

Shook to its base the isle's eternal rock?
Thy steel-clad watchman from his turret high,
Has heard it burst the lurid eastern sky, 170
As when the tempest which th' horizon shrouds
Rolls in the centre of his gather'd clouds,
And up the concave from the south afar
The distant Thunder drives his rapid car ;
And as his fiery steeds impetuous come,
And glance with ruddy track across the gloom,

So, red with blood and Desolation's stains
 The path of Ruin sweeps across thy plains.

Haste, Roman, haste! lo, bending to its fall
 Destruction trembles o'er Augusta's wall, 180
 Thy rising cities wildly shriek dismay'd
 And ask thy guardian hand, thy parent aid ;
 Go—bid the surge of insurrection bide
 In midway course, and backwards roll its tide ;
 No—bid thy angry Adria's waves obey
 Thy chiding voice, and call their storms away ;
 Push backwards up thy red Vesuvius' steep
 The lava torrent pouring to the deep ;
 Alike thy might is vain ; 'tis thine to fear
 Imperious despot! thine to tremble here. 190

Woe to thy towns! amid their shrieking walls
Quick in the work of death the falchion falls ;
Exulting there Destruction's Demons rise,
And on the steaming carnage mount the skies ;
And nodding ruins in a lake of blood
Mark the sad place where peopled cities stood.

Speak not of mercy ;—of the kindly glow
That warms the heart to spare a fallen foe.
Would'st thou to pity soothe with suasive tongue
The raging lioness who seeks her young, 300
And bid her if her course the spoiler meet
Fawn at his knees, and harmless kiss his feet ?
Frenzied with wrongs they seek revenge alone,
Mercy to beg or give alike unknown.

But ah! not yet 'tis theirs to view the foe
Crush'd at their feet, and laid for ever low :
Though droops his eagle crest and ruffled plumes
Still stern revenge his fiery eye illumes ;
Driven from his quarry, watchful yet he sails,
And wheels in distant circles on the gales, 210
And nearer sweeping still in balanced flight
Prepares to stoop with renovated might.

Heard ye the clang of mingling armies there,
Mix'd with the groans of Anguish and Despair,
And all the piercing sounds of battle roar
Loud as the deep that yawns on Norway's shore ;
When o'er the Ocean's voice of thunder rise
The shrieking vessel's agonizing cries.

Lo! chiefs sublime amid the storm of death
Buffet the raging surge that roars beneath, 220
And through the mangled files the scythe-arm'd car
Tears its red path across the opening war,
And naked bosoms bared to danger feel
The mailed legion's points of gleaming steel :
Ah, mourn not, warriors, for the life ye leave,
Grieve for your Albion, for your country grieve ;
For lo! the whirlwind blast of battle veers,
And backwards bends that grove of patriot spears,
And louder swell above the mingled cry
The Roman's pealing shouts of Victory. 230
In vain above the shatter'd throng is seen
With terror-darting eye the Warrior-Queen
While wet with blood her long bright tresses toss'd
Float like a standard o'er the rallying host ;

In vain the conquering legions pause and stand
In mid career, check'd by a woman's hand :
Borne down the cataract that sweeps the ground
O'er falling ranks her fiery coursers bound,
Fling from their rapid wheels the crimson spray
As Death and Fate in vain might stop their way,
And like some meteor red that shoots afar, 241
Across the gloom of elemental war,
Deep purpled o'er from head to heel with blood
They dart and vanish in yon blacken'd wood.

Unheard thy seraph notes, O Pity, rise
Where War's stern clamour raves along the skies ;
In vain would sex, would youth demand thy aid
To stay the Victor's slaughter-blunted blade.

With tiger port along the carnaged ground,
Glad Triumph stalks, and rolls his eyes around ;
And Freedom lingering ere she onward sweeps 251
To Caledonia's wilds and rugged steeps
Sheds o'er her sons and daughters there who fell
A mournful tear, and breathes a sad farewell.

But deep within that wood, where branches throw
A vaulted, monumental gloom below,
So still that all the battle's distant scream
The tumult of another world might seem,
Lo ! where its leafless arms yon blasted tree
Waves o'er the form of fallen Majesty. 260
Grasp'd in her hand that empty chalice tells,
Why on her forehead death's damp chilness dwells,

Why at her feet her children pale are seen,
Lovely in death with marble looks serene.
It seems as on her brow the changeful strife
Would soon for ever close, of Death and Life ;
It seems as Life but linger'd there to cast
One mother's look before she look'd her last.
And near a Druid's sacred brow is rear'd,
White on his harp is toss'd his silver beard, 270
While sad and wild amid the waving trees
The death-song floats upon the sighing breeze,
And seems in tones of sadden'd praise to shed
A grateful influence round her dying head.

Though o'er the strings his hands have ceased to
stray

And left the plaintive notes to die away,

They melt as if some spirit of the air
With notes of triumph loved to linger there.
Well may the Druid mark that vivid glow, 279
That lightning glance which fires her pallid brow ;
As if those sounds that breathed around had cast
On life's warm embers one reviving blast ;
As if those floating notes on wings sublime
Had borne her soul across th' abyss of time :
While her fix'd gaze in air appears to spy
Unearthly forms conceal'd from mortal eye,
And her pale lip triumphant smiles at death,
In accents wild she pours her parting breath :

“—Yes, Roman ! proudly shake thy crested brow,
’Tis thine to conquer, thine to triumph now ; 290

For thee, lo, Victory lifts her gory hand
And calls the Fiends of Terror on the land,
And flaps, as tiptoe on thy helm she springs,
Dripping with British blood her eagle wings.

“ Yet think not, think not long to thee 'tis giv'n
To laugh at Justice, and to mock at Heav'n ;
Soon shall thy head with blood-stain'd laurels
crown'd

Stoop at the feet of Vengeance to the ground.

I see amid the gloom of future days

Thy turrets totter, and thy temples blaze; 300

I see upon thy shrinking Latium hurl'd,

The countless millions of the northern world ;

I see, like vultures gathering to their prey,

The shades of states that fell beneath thy sway ;

They leave their fallen palaces and fanes,
Their grass-grown streets, and ruin-scatter'd plains,
Where lonely long they viewless loved to dwell,
And mourn the scenes that once they loved so well ;
Triumphant, lo! on all the winds they come
And clap th' exulting hand o'er fallen Rome, 310
And hovering o'er thy domes that blazing glow
Their waving pinions fan the flames below ;
They view rejoiced the conflagration's gleams,
Shoot their long glare o'er Tiber's redden'd streams ;
And snuff the carnage-tainted smokes that rise
An incense sweet, a grateful sacrifice.

—“ Sad Tiber's banks with broken columns
spread !

Fall'n every fane that rear'd to heav'n its head !

Poor heap of ashes! Grandeur's mould'ring tomb!
Art thou the place was once Eternal Rome? 320

“ Yes, Roman; snatch thy triumph whilst thou
may,

Weak is thy rage, and brief thy little day :
Vanish'd and past the momentary storm
Albion, my Albion, brighter shews her form.
Far o'er the rolling years of gloom I spy
Her oak-crown'd forehead lifted to the sky,
Above the low-hung mists unclouded seen,
Amid the wreck of nations still serene ;
She bursts the chains, when hands like thine would
bind
The groaning world, and lord it o'er mankind. 330

Amid yon glitt'ring flood of liquid light,
Float regal forms before my dazzled sight ;
Like stars along the milky zone that blaze
Their sceptred hands and gold-bound fronts they
raise :

My Sons !—my Daughters!—faint, alas, and dim
Before these failing eyes your glories swim,
Mix'd with the mists of death.—'Tis yours to throw
Your radiance round, while happier ages flow ;
I smile at storms of earthly woe, and rise
Shades of my sires! to your serener skies.” 340



W A L L A C E .

A Poem

WHICH

OBTAINED THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL

AT THE

CAMBRIDGE COMMENCEMENT

July, 1815.

BY EDWARD SMIRKE,

OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE.

“ Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
“ Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem.”

WALLACE.

ON Gambia's banks, no sweetly-breathing gale
Cheers the lone wild or fans the thirsty vale,
In weary silence rolls each livelong day,
And nature pants beneath the sultry ray :
Yet will the negro, from his deserts torn
And far away to western climates borne,
O'er the wide ocean cast a wistful eye,
And think upon his native sands and sigh.

Turn we to where the Northern tempest roars,
To Lapland's drear, inhospitable shores ; 10
The breast of Lapland owns no genial glow,
Pale is her aspect and her mantle snow ;
By Winter withered, shrouded by the storm,
Amid yon arctic rocks she lifts her form,
While ocean-blasts a deadly chilness shed,
And meteor phantoms hover round her head :—
And would you lure the peasant from his home
Beneath a milder, kinder heaven to roam ?
Vain were the task—His ev'ry thought and care
Still loves to linger in his native air ; 20
The child of woe, by cold and want opprest,
He boasts a patriot passion in his breast,
And, happy tenant of a humble shed,
Smiles at the storm that howls above his head.

Spirit of generous Pride, whose high command
Binds all affections to one spot of land ;
Thou that can'st wake a breeze on Afric's shore
And bid the Polar blast forget to roar ;
When, wrapt in History's page, the eye surveys
Deeds of the mighty dead in ancient days, 30
Is there a tongue that honours not thy name ?
A heart that burns not with thy kindling flame ?
Whether, in classic record, it retrace
Th' expiring efforts of a sinking race,
And mark the morn—morn dear to Rome and thee,
When Brutus struck and saw his country free ;
Or whether later times the tale disclose,
How Grisler triumph'd in a nation's woes,
Till vengeance bade insulted worth rebel,
And Freedom smiled upon the sword of Tell ; 40

Or how, unawed amid a cheerless land,
Brave WALLACE rear'd on high the patriot brand.

Wallace, undaunted foe to lawless power,
Friend to thy Scotland in her darkest hour,
In action daring, and in danger proved,
Famed for thy valour, for thy virtues loved ;
'These were the crimes that claim'd a tyrant's hate,
And gave thy manhood to an early fate.
Thee, Wallace, thee thy native woodlands mourn'd,
The grots and echoing caves the moan return'd ; 50
The frowning cliff, the torrent, vale, and glade,
Poured a sad tribute to thy pensive shade,
And ev'ry gale that blew from rock and sea,
And ev'ry zephyr bore a sigh for thee.

The shout of war, that waked a Southern host,
Was heard no more upon the sullen coast ;
In murmurs floating on the banks of Clyde,*
The last, sweet music of thy bugle died ;
That beacon blaze, which patriot hands had fired,
Glimmer'd a parting radiance and expired ; 60
Hush'd was each hope, the dream of gladness fled,
And Scotland languish'd, when her offspring bled.

Heard ye that war-note burst the deep repose?—
It was the knell of Caledonia's woes ;
O saw ye not the banner streaming red?—
That banner waves above a tyrant's head.

* Wallace was betrayed into the hands of Edward in the neighbourhood of Glasgow.

Proud with the spoils of Cambria's fallen state,
And reeking from the brave Lewellyn's fate,
Edward has summon'd all his warrior band
To pour the tide of battle on the land. 70

Insatiate king, when erst on Holy shore
Thy battle-blade was drench'd in Paynim gore,
Full oft the laurel bloom'd upon thy brow—
And seek'st thou yet another garland now ?
Lord of a mighty race, a wide domain,
Yet cans't thou envy Scotland's rugged reign ?
O sheath thy sword and fling thy buckler by,
Nor smite the mountain haunts of Liberty !—
But vain is Reason's voice, and weak her sway,
When thirst of endless empire leads the way, 80
And wild Ambition beckons and invites
To trample on mankind's insulted rights ;

To stand, with gory lance and flag unfurl'd,
High o'er the ruins of a prostrate world :
Then fair Religion seeks her inmost cell,
Indignant Justice bids a long farewell,
And Science breathes a last, a dying moan,
And sorrowing Virtue pines unpitied and unknown.

Cursed be the fatal day, when Edward came
In crested pride to urge a lawless claim ; 90
Cursed be the day.—Let weeping History tell
How fought the brave and how the noble fell,
When, slowly swelling, roll'd the battle tide
On Falkirk's field of death, and Carron's side—
The beam of morn, that rose on eastern height,
Danced on the plume of many a gallant knight ;

The ray, that lingered on the ocean-wave,
Kiss'd the red turf of many a soldier's grave :
Dark as the torrent's desolating flow,
And drear as winter was that time of woe. 100
Yet droop'd not Hope ; she turn'd her azure eyes
Where heaven-ward Caledonia's mountains rise,
And deep embosom'd in the gloom of night,
A star was seen to shed a lonely light ;
It burn'd afar with lustre pale and sweet,
To mark the spot of Freedom's last retreat.
There on a rock, unmoved and undismay'd,
The sable plumage waving o'er his head,
Stern Wallace stood. With high uplifted hand
He shook the gleamy terrors of his brand, 110
Glanced proudly on th' embattled host below,
And mock'd the menace of a conquering foe—

And long had mock'd,—but Heaven untimely
frown'd,

And pluck'd the fairest flow'r on Scottish ground.

It was no falchion raised in mortal strife

That snatch'd thee, Wallace, from the light of life ;

No arrow glided on the wings of death

To drink thy blood and steal away thy breath ;

Thine were no honours of a glorious grave,

The patriot's boast, the birthright of the brave ;

Far other fate thy generous zeal repaid,

Torn from thy country, by thy friend betray'd.—

Methinks I see thee led in sullen state, 121

High in thy fall, and, e'en in fetters, great,

And view thee dragg'd in all the pomp of woe,

A sport of impotence, a public show.

Still conscious virtue cheers thy latest hour,
Nor sinks thy spirit in the grasp of power ;
Still, in the pangs of death, thy closing eyes
Speak the proud thoughts that in thy bosom rise ;
And the last sigh, that gave the soul release,
Breath'd to thy Scotland liberty and peace. 130

O Wallace ! if my voice can pierce the gloom,
And rouse the silent slumbers of the tomb,
O'er thy cold dust the Muse shall pour her strain,
To tell thee, that thou did'st not fall in vain—
Yes, honour'd Shade ! though brief was thy career,
And not a stone records thy lowly bier ;
E'en yet, thy native woods and wilds among,
Thy wreaths are verdant and thy deeds are sung :

There haply as some minstrel tells thy tale 141

To many a mountain chief and listening Gael,

Their kindling bosoms catch the patriot flame,

And learn the path to Freedom and to Fame.

MAHOMET.

A Poem

WHICH

OBTAINED THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL

AT THE

CAMBRIDGE COMMENCEMENT

July, 1816.

BY HAMILTON SYDNEY BERESFORD,

OF CLARE-HALL.

MAHOMET.

WON from a jarring world, full oft the Muse
Th' eventful tale of other days reviews ;
With patriot deeds her glowing breast she fires,
Thinks with the sage, or with the bard aspires,
Till all so lovely bright her dream appears,
So fraught with glorious forms of other years,
That half she deems, this fair abode of fame
Had once of earth no vestige, but the name.

MAHOMET.

Alas! the sweet illusion charms not long,
Chased by the sons of rapine, and of wrong! 10
The victor-sword on her reluctant sight
Beams the wild flash of war's ensanguined light;
Her gaze pursues a meteor's path of fire,
And all her peaceful dreams at once expire.
She hates that meteor-flame, on which she dwells,
While one dark impulse in her bosom swells,
That wayward mood, that melancholy strain,
In which the heart perversely clings to pain.
She mourns the simple rustic's fruitless toil,
When Heroes tramp the harvest from his soil; 20
She mourns the limpid streamlet, bright no more,
When Heroes stain its startled wave with gore;
But when Ambition's heartless sons divide
The sacred bands, by love and nature tied,

When all the generous breast revered, adored,
Unhonoured falls beneath the victor-sword,—
Oh! then, half impious, she pre-dooms the blow,
Which Heaven reserves for man's relentless foe.

As Ocean's breast, beneath the changeful sky,
Assumes a robe of ever varying dye, 30
While, all unchanged, impetuous, vast and deep,
The tides below their awful secret keep,
Thus o'er her boundless aims though conquest throw
Ten thousand hues, Ambition works below.
She wants not fancied wrong, or fair pretence,
Justice, reform, reprisal, self-defence ;
These are the specious terms her flags display,
Her undissembling faulchion strikes for sway.

E'en meek Religion, at her stern command,
In arms exulting, fiercely waves the brand, 40
And through destruction's van to conflict driven,
Proclaims the blood-stained sword the key of
Heaven!

“ The key of Heaven and Hell,*” Mohammed cries,

“ On each believer's holy sabre lies.

“ One night in camps, one gore-drop trickling there,

“ Outweighs whole months of penance and of prayer.

“ The battle-slain, from earthly blemish pure,

“ Awaits the last tremendous day secure ;

“ Then shall his wounds with vermeil lustre glow,

“ Then from their lips shall breath of fragrance flow,

* Gibbon's Decline and Fall, Vol. IX. p. 297.

“ And in the place of each divided limb 51
“ Shall angel-plumes be fixed, and wings of cheru-
bim!”

Such were the words of promise, wild and vain,
By which the Warrior-prophet smoothed his reign.
He spoke to savage tribes of lawless life,
Whose trade was rapine, and whose joy was strife.
Like birds, that scent the battle-field afar,
To Yathreb's* walls they flocked, and watched for
war.

For them had Nature's niggard hand arrayed
Few soft retreats with verdure and with shade; · 60

* Medina.

O'er the dry sandy waste 'twas theirs to roam,
Denied that dearest boon, a social home,
Denied the common stream's unpurchased wave,
Though raging thirst the cool refreshment crave.
Thus more than poor, from Nature's stern decree
They gained one only blessing—Liberty.

But who was he, that chieftain bold and proud,
To whom the harsh Bedoween humbly bowed?
Mecca's enthusiast outcast, Yathreb's lord,
The self-raised Prophet, Preacher of the sword. 70
From infant years an orphan, on his head
Misfortune's withering blight was early shed.
He saw the wealth, the power, his birth should claim,
Assumed by stronger friends of kindred name,

Whose niggard hands on him bestowed alone

One meanest share of all he deemed his own.

Nay more, a home they gave—'twas meet in sooth

Who wronged his infancy should guard his youth.

Thus lonely left, no soft maternal breast

His murmurs soothed, or cradled him to rest ; 80

Moist with delight, no fond maternal eye

Watched his weak limbs their earliest efforts try,

No mother's balmy voice, with precept bland,

Bade his young bud of opening mind expand.

The heart, whose social ties are rent away,

In the wild loneliness of thought will stray ;

The heart, by Fortune's blind resentment torn,

Will seek in dreams a refuge less forlorn.

Oft to his mother's grave would he repair,

At eve's soft hour, to weep and linger there. 90

'Twas said, the pious tears that mourner shed
Bewailed her hapless doom, in error dead.
Perhaps some filial drops bedewed his cheek,—
Yet that firm spirit scorned a mood so weak.
Hope dimly seen, aspirings strange and high,
Forced the full tear from each unconscious eye.
Well might that tomb of all his joys recall
His birth-right proud, his youth's unpitied fall,
And well might fancy deem his parent shade
To all his vows a pleased attention paid. 100
For wealth he toiled, that best approach to power,
And wealth he found in love's propitious hour.
When Man or coldly fosters, or betrays,
Warm, generous Woman oft the slight repays:
His worth was pictured on Cadijah's breast,—
She gave that fancied worth the means of rest.

But ease he valued not, who sighed for fame,
And wealth inglorious seemed without a name.
His joyless home was but an eagle's nest,
Reared amid clouds, upon the mountain's crest, 110
Where, in the bosom of mysterious gloom,
He poised for one bold flight each strengthening
plume.

Remote from humankind, he loved to brood
O'er high designs, whose nurse is solitude.
He shunned the feast, and if he deigned to smile,
'Twas plain his dark heart wandered far the while ;
But when some pilgrim band, with fervour vain,
Grovelled beneath the Caaba's idol-fane,
He watched the pious dupes with scornful eye,
Or fled the scene's corruption with a sigh ;— 120

For on his soul truth shed a transient gleam,
E'er power disdained, or passion quenched the beam.

Genius of fraud—or fancy ! thou whose hand
Of Hera's cave the wild delusion planned !
Whate'er thou wert, how darkly wide have rolled
The waves of error from thy secret hold !
An Arab's name remoter realms obey,
Than Rome's imperial sceptre e'er could sway.
Her earthly fetters scarce the form might bind ; 129
His strange, mysterious chain controls the mind

Yes, in the depth of Hera's cave he wrought
The secret web of visionary thought ;
An angel-hand, he said, prepared the loom,
And dyed the woof in heaven's serenest bloom.

Few, very few, through many a tedious year,

Would lend that boastful tale a patient ear ;

But Mecca's sons upon th' enthusiast's head

Their bitter taunts, and free revilings shed.

“ Of old*,” they cried, “ the Prophet's gifted arm

“ Could melt the rock, the severed waters charm.

“ Do thou, since heaven to thee is all revealed, 141

“ Call down thy sacred volume, heavenly sealed ;

“ Bid Hera's darkling angel face the light ;

“ In the dry waste create a garden bright,

“ And then, if Mecca yet reject thy claim,

“ Command from yon blue vault avenging flame.”

The wounds of pride, that rankle deep and dark,

Writhe not the lip beneath a foe's remark.

* Gibbon, Vol. IX. p. 270.

On his calm, tutor'd brow, the glance of scorn
With pity blends for mortals so forlorn ; 150
But through his secret heart their mockery dealt
A pang, dissembled well, yet keenly felt.

But not for these declined his aim away
From its high mark of lost paternal sway ;
And those who deemed his heavenly claims a jest,
Feared the dark schemes of his aspiring breast.
With firm undaunted voice he preached aloud
Their rulers' crimes and vices to the crowd,
Till at the zealot's head, in evil hour, 159
Was hurled th' avenging bolt of outraged power.

Deep in the breast of Thor's protecting cave
He heard, with silent awe, the tempest rave.

Dark Hera's angel-inmate came not here,
Chased by the scowl of wan, unresting fear.
But when the storm along th' horizon's verge
Moaned, as in some low vale the distant surge,
In time mature, he left the womb of earth,
Than all her giant-brood a more portentous birth!

Stern Persecution! all thy racks are vain :
Zeal baffles force, and patience conquers pain. 170
Medina's sons a welcome refuge gave,
And hailed him ruler, whom they joyed to save.
Then to the priest's he joined the warrior's part,
For black revenge was busy in his heart,
And he had sworn his bitter foes should rue
Their headlong rage, in tears of sanguine hue.

Resounds the din of war through Yathreb's walls—
To arms! the prophet-warrior fiercely calls ;
With eager haste those lawless tribes obey,
Drawn by the lure of Paradise—or prey. 180

It boots not here, with borrowed rage, to dwell
On the wild rush of foes, the battle-swell ;
Of Beder's earliest field to mark the boast,
Where Mecca fled before th' Angelic host !
Nor the pale rout of Ohud's fearful day,
When wounds and death beset the Prophet's way.
Too oft the peaceful Muse hath shed a charm
O'er scenes abhorred of conflict and alarm ;
Too oft has taught the youthful heart to glow,
And crowned with Glory's wreath the brows of
Woe. 190

Religion, heavenly maid! in whose pure breast
Calm, dove-like peace, and joy for ever rest!
How, through thy chosen land, thy native East,
Were all thy laws perverted and defaced!
E'en where thy tearful smile was taught to glow
For boundless bliss, the meed of boundless woe,
There, in the midst of thy polluted fanes,
Were senseless forms adored, and vile remains;
There incense fumed, while many taper's glare
Perplexed the meek simplicity of prayer. 200
There, for the sloth and darkness of a cell,
Thy pampered votary bade the world farewell,
By his own hand a living death he died,
And claimed eternal bliss for suicide!

While thus thy genuine rites in pomp were lost,
On error's wave Arabia's sons were tossed.

The warm Bedoween blessed the friendly ray
Of each bright star, that shaped his trackless way;
Till Heaven's high lamps usurped the worship due
To their great Maker, whom he faintly knew. 210

O pitying Maid! thy tearful eye would melt
For those sharp pangs the patient camel felt,
When on his master's grave he pined away,
To serve the dead beyond the realms of day.
If scorn on thy meek brow could ever dwell,
The Caaba's motley scene deserved it well;
Where, with his blunted darts, red Hobal stood,
A wondrous form, controller of the flood!*

While blind devotion inly murmured there
To many a shape uncouth the fruitless prayer. 220

* To this idol (of red agate) was attributed the power of commanding rain. Sale's Preliminary Discourse.

And he, beneath whose arm were doomed to fall
Those idols dark, would he thy smile recall?
No—the stern zealot marred thy peaceful name
With murderous steel, and all-devouring flame;
He taught the soul predestined fate to brave,
And spread enjoyment's lure beyond the grave.

Oh! 'twas a note that charmed the savage ear,
To meet in Heaven the joys he valued here;
To drain the luscious coolness of the bowl,
In the rich banquet's sweets unharmed to roll, 230
Through flowery shades to woo luxurious rest,
Or bask in warm delight, for ever blest.
And yet, perchance, his hours of earthly joy,
E'en at their wildest height, had felt annoy,

A secret damp, his tongue could not impart—
The cloud that wraps the lightnings of the heart.
Why wrought that feeling, vague and undefined,
In blissful moments on his wayward mind?
'Twas that the soul, too fine for gross delight, 239
Despised the sensual chain, that clogg'd her flight,
And waved her drooping wing, and longed to soar
Where earthly joys delude frail man no more.

There is a bud in life's dark wilderness,
Whose beauties charm, whose fragrance soothes
distress ;
There is a beam in life's o'erclouded sky,
That gilds the starting tear it cannot dry.
That flower, that lonely beam, on Eden's grove
Shed the full sweets, and heavenly light of love.

Alas ! that aught so fair could lead astray
Man's wavering foot from duty's thornless way. 250
Yet, lovely Woman ! yet thy winning smile,
That caused our cares, can every care beguile,
And thy soft hand amid the maze of ill
Can rear one blissful bower of Eden still.
To his low mind thy worth is all unknown,
Who deems thee pleasure's transient toy alone ;
But oh ! how most deceived, whose creed hath given
Thine earthly charms a rival band in heaven !
Yet thou hast charms, that time may not dispel,
Whose deathless bloom shall glow where angels
 dwell : 260
Thy pitying tear in joy shall melt away,
Like morn's bright dew beneath the solar ray ;

Thy warm and generous faith, thy patience meek,
That plants a smile where pain despoils the cheek,—
The balm that virtue mingles here below,
To mitigate thy cup of earthly woe—
These shall remain, when sorrow's self is dead,
When sex decays, and passion's stain is fled.

To stern Mohammed Mecca bends the knee,
The doubtful prize of craft or victory. 270
His proudest foes are at the conqueror's feet ;
The fickle crowd their injured Prophet greet—
But where is she, from whom th' enthusiast drew
The first bright glance of hope's inspiring view ?
Cadajah sleeps where silence darkly reigns,
Nor shares his triumph now, who shared his pains.

Oh! blame her not, that fondly she believed,
For oft the purest heart is most deceived.
His ardent breast, the den of loose desire,
For many a fair had nursed unhallowed fire; 280
Yet, on the lap of youthful love reclined,
Cadajah's matron-shade would soothe his mind;
And once,* when beauty's pride presumed to claim
A praise superior to her treasured name;—
“No—by yon heavens,” he cried, “Cadajah gave
“Her generous love, when only love could save;
“Unfriended, poor, despised, she sought me then—
“A heart so true shall never beat again!”

By fraud or force advanced, Mohammed's name
Outstripped each hope his earlier years could frame:

* Gibbon, Vol. IX. p. 328.

The convert's humble soul that name adored, 291

Hung on his lips, and drank each holy word.

Who scorned his doctrine, feared the teacher's arm :

—Himself alone his wiles could never charm,

Nor sway, nor wealth, nor pleasure, hush to rest

The fiend, for ever wakeful in his breast.

Oh! when he traced the mazes of his plan,

How would his soul condemn deluded man,

Light as the desert sand, on every blast

Of passion's burning gale at random cast ; 300

But on himself he wreaked his deepest scorn,

Who stooped to cheat a creature so forlorn.

Ambition's dreary shore a refuge gave

From the dark swell of thought's devouring wave.

Yet he had felt the impotence of power
To buy one smile of joy, one peaceful hour :
But action's stormy din might drown the voice,
Whose still small whisper said, " No more rejoice."
Wide o'er Arabia's waste his flaming sword
Stamped the dark brand of Islam's fraudulent word ;
On Jordan's holy banks that sabre shone ; 311
His name was feared on high Byzantium's throne,
Where now the sullied bays of haughty Rome,
Torn from their native soil, disdained to bloom.
—What awful hand arrests his proud career,
And thrills his inmost heart with mortal fear ?
The power, whose noiseless shafts in darkness fly,
Burns in his blood, and glares in either eye.
In this dread hour, when worldly hopes subside,
When throbs the latest pulse of worldly pride, 320

When the wrapt soul on viewless scenes is bent,—
Say, will that stubborn, conscious mind relent?
No—his last fitful gleam of reason's ray,
Like some foul vapour, shone but to betray.

That light had sunk in death's unfathomed shade:
Low on the common ground his limbs were laid;
Yet the stern gaze of his unconscious eye
Appalled the sad enthusiasts, weeping by,
And on his parted lip was faintly seen
Some trace of high command, that once had been.
In the first doubtful pause of wild despair 331
Hope, short-lived, anxious hope, will vainly share.
“ He is not dead,* ” they cried, “ he cannot die,

* Gibbon, Vol. IX. p. 319.

“ Our Prophet here, our Advocate on high!

“ Wrapt in a holy trance,* her airy flight

“ His soul hath winged to Allah’s throne of light,

“ Whose secret laws, that scorn the bounds of time,

“ Form the dread theme of her discourse sublime.

“ On him shall Azrael’s dart descend in vain—

“ Mohammed must revive, for Jesus rose again!

Fount of eternal life! they durst compare 341

With Thee that breathless form extended there,

Dark fraud’s deserted cell, pride’s mouldering dust,

Ambition’s refuse vile, the dregs of lust.

—But THOU wert holy, guileless, poor, betrayed,

Meek as a lamb, that mutely waits the blade,

* Alluding to Mahomet’s pretended night-journey to heaven.

Pure as the dewy pearl of infant day,

Soft as the tear, that pity wipes away.

Thy hand of power, thy heart of heavenly love,

Displayed on earth the Soul that reigns above, 350

From dark and rayless orbs dispersed the night,

Oped the dull ear to sounds of new delight,

Stretched the shrunk sinew, loosed the speechless
tongue,

And waked the vital spark where death's cold damps
were hung!

'Twas the sole bliss of thy benignant sway

To heal all wounds, and wipe all tears away ;

'Nor could thy bitter foes' relentless ire

One angry thought of just revenge inspire.

The pomp of princely power, Ambition's aim,

Thy soul despised, and shunned obstreporous fame.

Thy throne was not of this tumultuous world, 361
 Reared on the wreck of kings, to ruin hurlèd,
 But where Ambition's tearful triumphs cease,
 In Heaven's high dome it stands, a throne of Peace.



Ye loftier strains adieu ! But ill ye suit
 The faint low murmur of a trifier's lute,
 Whose pausing tones, upon the hillock-side
 The thrush, with untaught song, hath oft outvied,
 When from his vesper-shade he viewed the west,
 And sweetly sung day's closing eye to rest. 370
 Enough for me, that Nature's mute command
 From all her vallies, bids my heart expand,—
 Enough for me, that where her mountains rise,
 Her torrents charm, her awful heights surprise.

To wake one pensive note in Nature's bower,
When thought would moralize her simplest flower,
To breathe a voice through Nature's varying hue,—
Be such thy care, my lute—Ye loftier strains adieu!

JERUSALEM.

A Poem

WHICH

OBTAINED THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL

AT THE

CAMBRIDGE COMMENCEMENT

July, 1817.

BY CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSEND, Esq.

FELLOW COMMONER OF TRINITY HALL.

JERUSALEM.

My Spirit some transporting Cherub feels
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk.——

Milton's Ode on the Passion.

FLUSH'D with her crimes, and swol'n with impious
pride,

Rebellious Judah still her God defied :

Then on Isaiah's eye prophetic rose

The lengthen'd vision of her future woes ;

Then, with his country's gathering fate imprest,

The sacred fervour labouring in his breast,

Against the guilty race his kindling lyre

Breathed the deep vengeance of th' Almighty's ire.

“Hear,* O ye Heav'ns, and thou, O Earth, give
ear,

“And trembling shrink the awful sounds to hear! 10

“The Lord—the Lord hath spoken from on high,

“Whose voice is fate, whose will is destiny.

“I see! † I see! the dread avengers come,

“Fierce as despair, insatiate as the tomb.

“Heard ye their wheels, like whirlwinds, sweep?
around?

“Heard ye their thundering coursers beat the ground?

“Mark'd ye their spears move on in long array,

“And shield on shield flash back the beam of day!

* Isai. i. 2.

† Isai. v. 26, &c. and xxix. 6.

“ O'er Salem's* walls Destruction sternly low'rs,
“ And eyes impatient her devoted towers. 20
“ Bow'd to the dust,† she mourns her slaughter'd
bands,
“ And strives in vain to lift her fetter'd hands.”

O greatly-fall'n, how humbled is thy state !
Thy fields how bare, thy courts how desolate !
Where Joy was wont the nightly dance to lead,
Shrieks the lone bat, and hungry vultures feed ;
There the fierce dragon finds a place of rest,
And boding screech-owls build their secret nest.
No more, Bethesda, o'er thy desert springs
Descending Seraphs wave their healing wings ; 30

* Isai. xxix. 3.

† Idem. 4th versc.

No more sweet sounds, at morn, or eve, declare
That hosts angelic hover on the air :
All—all is fled ; and Desolation reigns,
Without a rival, o'er thy ravaged plains.

O days divine, of you may mortal sing,
When God himself was Israel's Guard and King ?
Will not the eloquence of earthly speech
Fail from a height, which fancy scarce can reach ?
To know Creation's Monarch ever nigh,
A staff in sorrow, and a friend in joy ; 40
To see Heav'n's glories visibly display'd,
And all its Seraphim in light array'd ;
These were thy rights, O Israel, this thy boast,
These the high joys, thy disobedience lost.

Bear witness, Hermon, thou whose dewy sod
Has felt the footstep of a present God ;
And, Carmel, thou, whose gales, with incense
 fraught,
The murmurs of a voice divine have caught ;
What dreams extatic o'er the vot'ry stole,
How swell'd the pious transport in his soul ! 50
E'en now, when o'er your long-forsaken sweets
The Pilgrim lingers, in your loved retreats,
Steal visionary forms along the vale,
And more than music whispers on the gale.

O had I pinions,* fleet as those, that bear
The dove exulting thro' the realms of air,

* Psalm lv. 6.

Then would I visit every holy shade,
Where Saints have knelt, or Prophets musing
 stray'd;
Bend with a sigh o'er every relic near,
And pay each shrine the tribute of a tear. 60

Where o'er the waste, in rude disorder thrown,
Neglected lie yon crumbling heaps of stone,
O who (sad change!) the blest abode could tell,
Where God's own glory once vouchsafed to
 dwell?

Yet Fancy still the ruin'd fane can raise
Bright with the glories of departed days.
Swift to the view its scatter'd wealth restore,
And bid its vanish'd splendors beam once more.

Ev'n as I gaze,* the sudden spires ascend,
With graceful sweep the long-row'd arches bend ;
Aspiring shafts the heaving dome sustain, 71
And lift the growing fabric from the plain.
See, as it rises, all the world combine
Its various gifts to deck the work divine :
Nature no more her secret treasures hides,
The mine uncloses, and the deep divides.
Mild o'er the wave the fav'ring breezes play,
And waft the Tyrian purple on its way.
Her purest marble rocky Paros lends,
Her sweetest odours soft Idumè blends ; 80
On Carmel's heights the stately cedar falls,
And Ophir glistens on the polish'd walls.

* 1 Kings, ch. vi. passim.

See, while the slow-expanding gates unclose,
How rich within the boundless lustre glows!
Here the tall palm for ever lives in gold,
There sculptur'd flowers their fretted leaves un-
fold;
Thro' the long aisles bright lamps incessant beam,
And burnish'd censers roll the spicy stream.
But far within retires the dread abode,
Jehovah's throne—the Oracle of God; 90
Two cherubs there, with mimic glories bright,
High o'er the Ark their guardian wings unite.
Beneath that shade no earthly treasures lie,
No emblems frail of human majesty.
But there enshrin'd the Holy Tablets rest,
By God ordain'd, by God himself imprest.

Thine were these mighty works, by thee design'd
Belov'd of God, and wisest of mankind.
What* to thy Sire the will of Heav'n denied
To thee it gave, propitious, to provide. 100
Yet, while thy temple in the dust decays,
Lives the full splendor of his sacred lays,
O skill'd to wake the ever-varying lyre,
With all a Prophet's—all a Poet's fire,
What breast, that does not kindle at thy strain?
What heart, that melts not, when thy strings com-
plain?
Hark, how the notes in mournful cadence sigh,
Soft as the breeze, that only wakes to die.

* 2 Sam. vii. 4.

Changed is their tone; th' impetuous measures
sweep, 109

Like the fierce storm conflicting with the deep.

Now all th' angelic host at once combine

Their golden harps in unison with thine.

Extatic fervors seize the trembling soul,

And Halleluiahs ring from pole to pole.

What* fearful omens heralded the hour,

That gave Judæa to a tyrant's power!

As sank the sun, amid the western blaze

Terrific visions burst upon the gaze.

Unearthly spears reflect the setting beam, 119

Swords wave, helmets glitter, hostile standards stream;

* Josephi Hist. et Tacit. lib. v. c. 13.

And thronging chariots, hurrying swiftly by,
Sweep the wide air, 'till darkness veils the sky.
Nor ceased the portents then : a lurid light
Shot a fierce splendor from the clouds of night ;
Its own sad hue o'er all the temple spread,
And on each fear-struck face a ghistlier paleness
shed.

See! see untouch'd by any human hand,
The temple's gates—her massy gates—expand!
No earthly sound is that within I hear,
As waters bursting on the deafen'd ear, 130
Proclaiming, as it's awful thunders swell,
“ The Lord no more in Israel deigns to dwell : ”
No mortal foot th' affrighted threshold trod—
'Tis God's own voice, the parting step of God!

Yes, thou art now abandon'd to thy fate ;
Vain is regret, repentance comes too late.
Already onward rush thy angry foes,
Already thy devoted walls enclose :
Death with pleased eye pursues their destined way,
And cheers them on, exulting, to their prey. 140

Darker, and darker still thy doom appears,
And Sorrow's face a blacker aspect wears.
In vain with equal hand does Justice deal
To each the stinted, and unjoyous meal ;
With looks despairing, as they ask for food,
Breaks one shrill shriek from all the multitude :
No more remains to fan life's feeble fires,
And Hope's last throb just flutters, and expires.

Ev'n the fond mother, seized with madness wild,
While in her arms th' unconscious infant smiled,
Drove to its heart the unrelenting steel, 151
And quench'd her fury on th' accursed meal.

Amid the tumult of th' embattled field,
Death! thy stern terrors are but half revealed.
For, e'en if Victory smile not, Glory's beam
Casts a clear light on life's last ebbing stream.
But, worn by wasting famine, to decay,
Hour after hour, by slow degrees away;
No cheering hope, no glowing pulse to feel,
No kindling fervour of exalted zeal; 160
Sunk in despair, to wish, yet fear to die,
This—this is death, in all its agony!

Yet, worn by hunger, and opprest with ill,
Thy hardy sons remain unconquer'd still.
Weakness, and strength alike their weapons wield,
And they, who cannot conquer, scorn to yield.

Hark, how without the deafening tumult
grows,

How swell the shouts of thy victorious foes !
Behold, ten thousand torches, hurl'd on high,
Gleam o'er the walls, and seem to fire the sky. 170
Now, Salem, now, the spreading flame devours
Thy homes, thy temple, and thy headlong towers :
Now vengeance smiling scours th' ensanguined
plain,
And waves her pinions o'er thy countless slain.

'Tis done; proud Salem smokes along the ground,
Her pow'r a dream, her name an empty sound.
To other realms, from Sion far away,
In mute despair, her last sad remnant stray ;
While all the malice of relentless hate,
Beneath their foes, her captive sons await; 180
With no kind care their inward wounds to heal,
While insult sharpens ev'ry pang they feel.

Yet say, base outcasts of offended Heav'n,
Rebelling still as often as forgiv'n,
Say are the woes, that now your race pursue,
More than your crimes, or heavier than your due ?
How oft your God has turn'd his wrath away,
How oft in mercy has forborne to slay !

How long* by gentle chastisement he strove
To win once more his people to his love! 190
Ah, call to mind, when in a distant land
Forlorn ye bow'd beneath a stranger's hand,
His hot displeasure on your haughty foes
Pour'd the full tempest of unsparing woes.
Then, as his flock the tender shepherd leads
To softer herbage, and more fertile meads,
He led his chosen people far away,
Their guide in darkness, their defence by day.
Lo, at his word th' obedient depths divide,
And whelm th' Egyptian in their refluent tide; 200
While rescued Israel, free from every care,
Gains the wish'd bank, and pours the vocal prayer.

* Psalm cv. and cvi. passim.

From the cleft rock see sudden rills rebound,
And spread fresh verdure o'er the thirsty ground!
Yet still anew your disobedience sprung,
And discontent still murmur'd on your tongue;
To graven idols still the knee ye bow'd,
And join'd in Baal's courts th' incestuous crowd.
Still in your pride ye mock'd the threatening
Seer,
As the deaf adder shuts her reckless ear; 210
Plung'd in the Prophet's breast th' unhallow'd
sword,
And dared to slay the chosen of the Lord.

Swift into light th' expected years roll on,
Th' Almighty Father sends his promised Son.

Not as when Sinai view'd the law reveal'd
In fearful lightning, and in thunder seal'd ;
Now peaceful omens cheer the drooping earth,
And hail the tidings of the Heav'nly birth.
Hush'd was the world in darkness and in sleep,
The wakeful shepherds watch'd their folded sheep.
Clad in the radiant glory of the skies, 221
A form angelic burst upon their eyes ;
And, slowly stealing on their wond'ring ear,
Rose the glad sounds, 'twas Heav'n itself to
hear.

“ Joy to the world ! ye nations cease to mourn,
“ Now is the Christ, the promis'd Saviour born ! ”
And, lo, descending, the celestial train
Swell the full chorus of the rapt'rous strain ;

Till on the gale the notes departing die,
And the bright vision melts into the sky. 230

Did ye not then with bursts of transport raise
The loud hosannah of exulting praise ?
With trembling homage round his cradle bend,
Watch every look, and every smile attend ;
And all Creation's noblest gifts combine
To form an off'ring for the Babe divine ?
Or, when, his mortal part matured to man,
His earthly ministry at length began,
Did ye not crowd his heav'nly words to hear,
And drink instruction with delighted ear ? 240
No—harden'd still your stubborn souls remain,
As sterile rocks resist the softening rain.

Tho' to the blind unwonted day returns,
 And pale Disease with health's new ardor burns ;
 Tho', deaf to other voice, th' obedient tomb,
 For him revers'd her universal doom ;
 More fell than sickness, colder than the grave,
 Ye shar'd his gifts, yet spurn'd at him who gave.

Driv'n* thro' the world, unknowing where to lie,
 Despised, rejected, and condemn'd to die, 250
 Before his foes behold Messiah stand,
 Meek † as a lamb beneath the shearer's hand.
 O turn on yonder faded form your eyes,
 Oppress'd with sorrow, and consumed in sighs !

* Isai. liii. 5.

† Idem, 7th verse.

Mark that pale brow, with streaming blood embrued,
Where Resignation blends with Fortitude ;
Those lips in inward prayer that gently move,
Those eyes, yet beaming with unconquer'd love ;
The meek composure which those looks declare,
That holy calm ; and say if guilt be there ? 260

O love unbounded, more than words can tell
Tho' hymning angels on the theme should dwell :
Not to one people, not one age confined,
But flowing ever on to all mankind !
See, on the cross those limbs in torture hang,
Convulsed, and quiv'ring with the deathful pang !
A deeper sorrow dwells upon that face,
Than Pain's severest agony could trace ;

Ev'n now his spirit mourns Creation's woes,
 And breathes compassion for his cruel foes. 270
 See, by a world's united crimes opprest,
 He bows his head submissive on his breast.
 Now fades the light from those expiring eyes,
 And Judah's King—her Lord—her Saviour dies!

Can this be He before whose awful nod
 Ev'n seraphs shrink? Is this the Son of God?
 Heir of the world, and Monarch of the sky?
 The voice of Nature shall itself reply.
 Else why, O Sun, conceal thy face in dread,
 Why tremble, Earth,* and why give up thy dead?

* Matt. xxvii. 51, 52.

Why rends the temple's mystic veil in twain, 281
And fearful thunders shake th' affrighted plain?

Yet, blind to truth, say, wretched outcasts, say,
Wait ye the Saviour of a future day?
Lo, he has lived to bless, has died to save,
And burst the brazen fetters of the grave!
Awake, redeem'd Jerusalem,* awake,
And from the dust thy sullied garments shake!
From thy gall'd neck unloose the servile bands,
And cast the fetters from thy captive hands. 290
Break forth, ye mountains, into joyful song!
Ye barren wilds, the rapt'rous strain prolong!

* Isah. lii. 1, 2, 9.

Barren no more; unwonted verdure grows,
And the dry desert blossoms as the rose.
Behold, all Nature proves a second birth,
New skies embrace a new-created earth :
From the glad scene for ever Woe retires,
Pain is no more, and Death himself expires.
Ye angels, strike the full-resounding lyre,
Swell the glad chorus, all ye heav'nly choir! 300
She comes! † she comes! descending from on high
The Holy City meets the ravish'd eye!
Bride of the Lamb, without a spot, or stain,
Cleans'd of her crimes, and ransom'd of her
chain.

† Rev. xxi. 1, 2. &c,

Look at her gates, her glorious tow'rs behold,
More clear than crystal, and more fair than gold.
There dwell the Lord's Redeem'd in glory bright,
Gaze on his face, and live amidst his light :
Haste the delights, that time can ne'er destroy,
Eternal fulness of unfading joy. 310

THE END.

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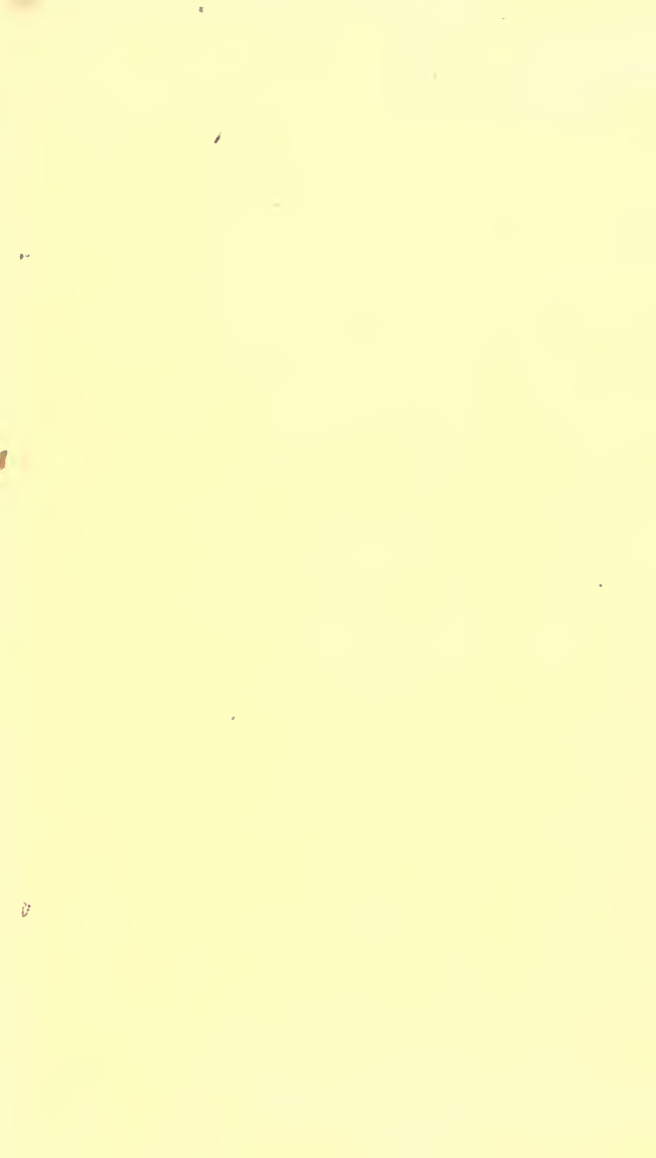
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